

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant:	Jorge Orbay	Group Art Unit:	3738
Serial No.:	10/762,695	Examiner:	Isabella, David
Filed:	January 22, 2004	Attorney Docket:	HAN-030
		J&J Docket:	DEP5685USCIP8
Title:	Orthopedic Fixation System Including Plate Element with Threaded Holes Having Divergent Axes		

Honorable Commissioner for Patents
Alexandria, VA 22313

Sir:

REPLY TO OFFICE ACTION

This is a reply to an office action dated August 14, 2006. No fee is submitted herewith. If any fee is due, please charge the fee to deposit account no. 07-1732.

ELECTION

The Examiner has indicated that the following figures represent patentably distinct species and has required restriction to one thereof:

Plate: Figs. 2, 7, 10, 25;
Pegs, Fixation: Figs. 3, 3a, 4, 13, and 26.

In view thereof, applicant elects to prosecute, with traverse, claims directed to the species shown in Fig. 10 with respect to the plate. Claims 1-3, 9, 10, 12, 14-18, 28, 29, 31-35, 37-40, 42, 44-50 and 52-53 read on the elected species.

In addition, applicant elects to prosecute, with traverse, claims directed to the species of peg shown in Fig. 3. Claims 37-42, 44-49 and 52-53 read on the elected species.

The applicant traverses the restriction requirement of claims directed to the plate on the basis that claims directed to identified species 2 and 10 should be searched and examined together. Dependent claim 41 is the only claim presently in the application not directed to the elected species. A complete search of the all of the claims in the application relative to the elected claims will not be a significant burden on the examiner. If the restriction is maintained, assuming that independent claim 37 from which claim 41 depends is placed in condition for allowance, it is requested that claim 41 be allowed back into the case and allowed to proceed to issue.

The applicant traverses the restriction requirement of claims directed to the pegs/fixation on the basis that claims directed to identified species 3, 3a, and 13 should be searched and examined together. Dependent claim 49 is the only claim directed to

pegs/fixation presently in the application not directed to the elected species. The limitation added by claim 49 is a thread on the shaft of peg. A complete search of the all of the claims in the application relative to the elected claims will not be a significant burden on the examiner. If the restriction is maintained, assuming that independent claim 37 from which claim 49 depends is placed in condition for allowance, it is requested that claim 49 be allowed back into the case and allowed to proceed to issue.